

Dear Senators,

I wish to comment on Senator Brown's Bill. I do not agree that this Bill is in accord with good government and recommend that it should not proceed. First, a plebiscite does not provide sufficient information to voters who cannot make a proper assessment of the subject matter. Second, this is taking an unfair advantage of the new generation of young Australians who were too young to vote in the 1999 Referendum, which returned an overwhelming No in a large majority of electorates. There have been quite a number of polls since then resulting in a confused picture of the situation because of the varied nature of the questions. These do not have any real effect on whether or not Australia should become a Republic. Only a properly conducted referendum can do this. Third, the Rudd Government has stated that this matter is not presently a high priority and most people can accept this. The question is why is a minor party (the Greens) trying to get a result of very limited use instead of waiting as the Prime Minister has announced? My thought is to try to gain some credit at a time the Greens image is very low. Fourth, whatever is the intention, such a plebiscite will cost public money and at this time of economic crisis how can we use our scarce resources for such a non-event?

Thank you, Peter Rice